

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SANTO 04075 261746Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----068584 261747Z /43
O 261700Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5448

S E C R E T SANTO DOMINGO 4075

EXDIS

EO 11652 XGDS-4
TAGS: PINT, PINS, DR
SUB: GUZMAN'S PLANS TO CONFRONT DOMINICAN MILITARY

REF: STATE 186835 (EXDIS)

1. I CALLED ON PRESIDENT -ELECT GUZMAN AFTERNOON OF JULY 25
TO GIVE HIM THE ORIGINAL OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER (STATE
178232) AND TO DISCUSS WITH HIM ISSUES RAISED IN SANTO DOMINGO
4006 AND IN REFTEL.

2. GUZMAN STILL PLANS TO FIRE NIVAR ON AUGUST 16 OR, PERHAPS MORE
CORRECTLY PUT, TO MOVE NIVAR TO ANOTHER POST OUT OF THE COMMAND LINE.
THIS MIGHT BE A CIVILIAN POST. GUZMAN SAYS HE HAS NOT MENTIONED
THIS INTENTION TO ANYONE ELSE, EVEN WITHIN HIS OWN PARTY, THOUGH
THE WORD IS STARTING TO GET BACK TO US FROM OTHER SOURCES.
THE US MUST IN ANY EVENT BE EXTREMELY CAREFUL
AT THIS POINT TO CONTINUE TO PROTECT HIS CONFIDENCE.

3. I LAID OUT FOR HIM THE CONSENSUS OF THE COUNTRY TEAM THAT
THE PRESENT CONSTELLATION OF MILITARY COMMANDERS WOULD CONSTRAIN
SEPARATE ACTION BY NIVAR OR CONCERTED ACTION
BY HIM WITH OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES.
THE RATIONALE FOR THIS ASSUMPTION IS LAID OUT IN A SEPARATE
REPORTY BY THE DAO (IR 6-827-0149-78 DTG 261630Z JUL). (AWARENESS

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OF POPULAR HOSTILITY TO A MILITARY MOVE WOULD, OF COURSE, BE
ANOTHER IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THE GENERALS' THINKING). THIS
IS NOT TO SAY THAT NIVAR, ALONE OR WITH OTHERS, COULD NOT
TAKE SOME ILL-CONSIDERED ACTION. HOWEVER, THE
CHANCES OF THIS OCCURRING ARE MUCH LESS THAN THEY WERE SEVERAL
WEEKS AGO, DESPITE HIS SHIFT TO THE FIRST BRIGADE.

4. I PUT THIS FORWARD TO GUZMAN, BOTH IN ORDER TO CONTINUE THE FRANK EXCHANGE WHICH HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED WITH THIS EMBASSY AND IN ORDER TO TRY TO SMOKE OUT WHETHER THERE WERE SOME CONCRETE FACT, OF WHICH WE WERE UNAWARE, THAT WAS BOTHERING HIM. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THIS IS NOT THE CASE. HE WENT OVER THE SAME GROUND THAT I HAD JUST COVERED AND INDICATED THAT HE EXPECTED TO BE ABLE TO GET THROUGH THIS DIFFICULT PERIOD WITHOUT A MILITARY COUP AGAINST HIM. HE MENTIONED, IN ADDITION TO THE PRESENT BALANCE OF COMMANDS, THE PRESENCE OF OFFICERS AT LOWER RANKS WHO WOULD MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO CARRY OFF A GENERAL'S COUP. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD BEGIN TOMORROW TO MAKE INDIVIDUAL CALLS ON A SERIES OF OFFICERS AND WE KNOW THAT IN THE MEANTIME HE HAS BEEN ESTABLISHING HIS LINES WITH CUERVO GOMEZ (CG OF THE COMBAT SUPPORT COMMAND) AND PERHAPS WITH OTHERS.

5. GUZMAN IS OBVIOUSLY BOTHERED BY HIS INABILITY TO RELY ON ANYTHING BALAGUER TELLS HIM. EXPANDING ON THIS THEME AGAIN, GUZMAN SAID THAT BALAGUER HAD TOLD HIM FACE TO FACE THAT HE (BALAGUER) WOULD MAKE NO PERSONNEL CHANGES OR TAKE ANY ACTIONS DURING HIS LAST WEEKS IN OFFICE THAT WOULD IMPEDE THE ABILITY OF THE SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENT TO GOVERN. THIS IS PATENTLY NOT THE CASE. WHEN I PRESSED HIM AS TO WHAT OF THE NEWLY PASSED LEGISLATION, FOR EXAMPLE, WOULD GIVE HIM REAL TROUBLE, HE SAID THAT THERE WAS PROBABLY NOTHING SO FAR (INCLUDING THE ARMED FORCES
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LEGISLATION, WHICH WE DISCUSSED) THAT, ONCE HE WAS IN OFFICE, COULD NOT BE UNDONE WITH TIME AND PATIENCE. HOWEVER, HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT WHAT STILL MIGHT BE IN STORE TO OBSTRUCT HIS CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT. (LATER THAT DAY, HE EXPRESSED TO THE EMBASSY POLITICAL COUNSELOR CONCERN ABOUT REPORTS OF SEVERAL NEW LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS BEING READIED FOR SUBMISSION, NOTABLY BILLS DESIGNED TO PUT THE STATE SUGAR ENTERPRISE (CEA) AND AGRARIAN REFORM UNDER MILITARY CONTROL AND TO IMPOSE A FREEZE ON CIVIL SERVICE DISMISSALS.)

6. IN THIS SETTING, HE WAS GREATLY PLEASED TO HAVE THE MESSAGE CONTAINED IN PARA 2 REFTEL AND THE ASSURANCE THAT AMERICAN POLICY VIS-A-VIS DOMINICAN EVENTS REMAINS UNCHANGED. HE DISMISSED ANY THROUGH THAT THE US HAD SUPPORTED OR FOMENTED THE RECENT AWARDED OF FIVE CONGRESSIONAL SEATS TO THE REFORMISTAS---A CANARD WHICH HAS BEEN CIRCULATING IN THE SANTO DOMINGO RUMOR MILL--AND I THINK HE REJECTS THIS QUITE SINCERELY. NEVERTHELESS, WE DO NEED TO CONTINUE REASSURING HIM OF USG SUPPORT FOR THE INCOMING ADMINISTRATION. HE OBVIOUSLY APPRECIATED WASHINGTON'S ATTENTION TO HIS CONCERNS.

7. I TOLD GUZMAN THAT THE EMBASSY WAS TRYING TO TIE DOWN EVENTS FOR INAUGURATION DAY SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR A MEETING BETWEEN HIMSELF AND THE SECRETARY AND THAT I WOULD BE TALKING TO THE FOREIGN SECRETARY IN THAT REGARD. HE SAID THAT SUCH A MEETING WOULD OF COURSE BE INDISPENSABLE AND HE WOULD GREATLY LOOK FORWARD TO IT.

8. EMBASSY WILL BE PROVIDING ITS FURTHER THOUGHTS IN REGARD TO QUESTIONS RAISED REFTEL. I HAVE REQUESTED AN APPOINTMENT WITH BALAGUER.
YOST

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NNN

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